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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

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SUBJECT Nazi War Criminals

MIKE WALLACE: Close to 200,000 Americans lost their lives fighting the Nazis in World War II, and yet hundreds of those Nazis and their collaborators eventually wound up living comfortably here in the United States, becoming U.S. citizens. How did it happen? That is the story we shall tell in "The Nazi Connection," a story you have never heard till now, of how highly placed U.S. officials, despite the express orders of two Presidents of the United States, invited Nazi collaborators, killers, to these shores to trade what they knew about the Soviet Union for sanctuary here.

JOHN LOFTUS: Several hundred Nazi collaborators from Eastern Europe and Russia were smuggled into the United States for intelligence purposes.

WALLACE: Smuggled by whom?

LOFTUS: State Department intelligence. Specifically, the Office of Policy Coordination. It was the first covert spy agency set up in the United States. They predated the CIA by several months.

WALLACE: Who is this man making these charges, and what gives him the right to say what he has just said? His name is John Loftus, and for two years he was a prosecutor with the Office of Special Investigations in the Department of Justice responsible for weeding Nazis and Nazi collaborators out of the United States. His security clearance went three levels above top secret. But this young Irish-Catholic attorney, now in private practice in Boston, has decided that his conscience demands that he bring to light what he says remained for too long a dark and sinister top secret.

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LOFTUS: We had one unit of the government out trying to prosecute the Nazis, and other units of the government trying to secrete the information. We later established that the files pertaining to the Nazi immigration had been withheld from Congress, from the courts, from the CIA, and from the local agents of the Immigration Service.

WALLACE: Didn't President Roosevelt, didn't President Truman say specifically that war criminals were not to be brought into the country?

LOFTUS: That's absolutely true.

WALLACE: And Jimmy Carter went even further in 1980 when he said that any Nazi war criminal who had gotten into the United States should be rooted out.

PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER: The world must never forget the lessons of the Holocaust. That is exactly the reason why, after 40 years of government inaction, I set up a special unit in the Department of Justice to root out Nazi war criminals who may be in hiding in the United States.

WALLACE: That was the unit John Loftus worked for, a unit that is still trying to denaturalize and/or deport Nazi war criminals living in the United States.

We asked Loftus who it was who had run the old OPC, the Office of Policy Coordination, that was responsible for bringing Nazi collaborators into the United States.

LOFTUS: A man by the name of Frank Wisner. He was a former intelligence operator during World War II.

WALLACE: With the OSS?

LOFTUS: That's correct. His boss was Allen Dulles in Germany.

WALLACE: The Office of Strategic Services, was it called?

LOFTUS: Yes, it was.

WALLACE: Was there nobody in the State Department at a higher level who knew what was going on and okayed it? Did Frank Wisner have no boss?

LOFTUS: There were three men who, principally, were Eisenhower's representatives for cold war affairs during the early '50s: C.D. Jackson; Undersecretary of HEW Nelson Rockefeller; and Vice President Richard Nixon.

WALLACE: Would they have known that former Nazi war criminals were being employed by U.S. military intelligence and were being invited into the country, given U.S. citizenship, despite what they had done?

LOFTUS: I read some classified information that indicated that a number of these programs were approved at the highest levels.

WALLACE: Whether Richard Nixon, the late Nelson Rockefeller, and the late C.D. Jackson, former publisher of Time-Life, whether they knew is still an open question. But if they didn't know, then they too were being lied to, as was the case with the Congress later on.

The story begins here, when the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. Just a few months after the invasion began, the Nazis had captured huge tracts of territory that extended from the Ukraine to Byelorussia. Byelorussia was to be the Nazis' highway to Moscow.

At first, the Nazis were welcomed as liberators by the people, scarred by the purges of Stalin. But that changed when the Einsatzgruppen, the Nazi mobile killing squads, entered. These units recruited collaborators from among the Soviet people to massacre hundreds of thousands of civilians. The Russian collaborators with the Nazis served so faithfully and so well that the Germans made the collaborators into their own SS Division, known as the Bularis (?) SS.

LOFTUS: We're talking about the leaders of an SS division that fought against Americans and the leaders of a Nazi puppet government in Byelorussia that by the end of the war had exterminated 25 percent of their civilian population, including nearly all of the country's Jewish population, some three-quarters of a million Jews.

I decided to pick one of the regions of Byelorussia and see if we could find how many Nazi officials from that region were in the country. All of them were. They knew that the entire Nazi government of Byelorussia, the president, the vice president, cabinet ministers, governors, mayors, police chiefs, were all living in America. They knew that.

WALLACE: Who's "they"?

LOFTUS: The FBI, Army counterintelligence, Army foreign intelligence, the Department of State. They knew and they recruited them because they were Nazis.

WALLACE: As early as 1946, the major espionage services of the United States and the Soviet Union were engaged in a clandestine conflict. The demand for intelligence was so great that a seller's market sprang up. Hundreds of former Nazis and Nazi collaborators found employment in one intelligence service or another. A few of the boldest worked for both sides.

According to Loftus, emigres with intimate, if dated, knowledge of Eastern Europe and former Nazi intelligence officers competed to peddle fabricated reports to any intelligence service gullible enough to buy them. And OPC was a willing buyer.

But I still want to make this clear. Did U.S. military intelligence know the kind of people they were bringing in?

LOFTUS: Beyond a shadow of a doubt.

WALLACE: Shortly after being appraised of what Loftus had learned, Alan Ryan, head of the office Loftus worked in, sent a top secret report in October 1980 to then-Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti saying that this was the single-most important matter his office was engaged in. That report said, "It should be apparent that the matters discussed in this report are extremely sensitive, both because of the number of Byelorussian Nazis who entered this country and the extent to which U.S. Government agencies apparently assisted that entry, possibly in violation of the law."

John Loftus also gave a set of classified documents on the matter to Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank of the House Subcommittee on Immigration.

When you first heard this tale, Congressman Frank, what'd you think?

REP. BARNEY FRANK: I thought it couldn't possibly be true. I thought it was the kind of thing that paranoid type people make up and it really wasn't true. To think that within a year or two after discovering the death camps, that top officials of the American government could have been working with butchers, Nazi butchers, to kind of sneak them into the country, no, I didn't believe it.

WALLACE: Are you convinced now the story's true?

REP. FRANK: I'm convinced it's true. Yes.

WALLACE: What has convinced you?

REP. FRANK: The documents I've read. Either someone has done, for purposes I couldn't fathom, the most massive set of forgeries in history, or the documents make it very clear.

WALLACE: What documents have you seen, Congressman Frank, that convince you?

REP. FRANK: One that I have right here, which is a page on Emmanuel Joshuk (?), who was one of the Nazi leaders in Byelorussia who was guilty of the worst kinds of crimes, smuggled over here, allowed to become a citizen.

WALLACE: What's it say?

REP. FRANK: It says, for instance, that in approximately February 1942, he was appointed Mayor of Stoltcha (?). Two months later he was raised to the position of head of the District of Stoltcha, which he held until 1944.

People should understand that he was appointed to these positions in occupied Russia by the Nazis.

WALLACE: By the German Nazis.

REP. FRANK: By the German Nazis, and where he was in fact promoted because of his good work.

WALLACE: What was his good work?

REP. FRANK: His good work was to help, one, murder innocent Jewish people; two, to fight the Allies.

WALLACE: Why was U.S. intelligence so interested in bringing these people into this country? What did these Byelorussians have to offer?

LOFTUS: They convinced OPC and military intelligence to fund their operations, that they could provide Americans with a secret army being the Iron Curtain. It was a tragic lie. Every one of their operations had been penetrated by the Soviets.

WALLACE: During the 1950s, according to Loftus, the OPC dropped Byelorussians inside the Soviet Union by parachute.

LOFTUS: The parachute teams that were sent in had an astounding fatality rate. Nearly all the paratroopers were caught and killed within minutes after they landed.

WALLACE: Ostensibly there to set up a network, to set up a listening post or watching post.

LOFTUS: Oh, there was more to it than that. The program was assassination.

WALLACE: These were hit teams?

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LOFTUS: That's correct. They were to start a civil war behind the Iron Curtain.

WALLACE: Apparently, they were not very successful. On the contrary, it was a botch.

LOFTUS: It was worse than a botch. Many of the Byelorussians were later identified as having been double agents. They didn't have much difficulty. The Soviets had penetrated both the British and the German intelligence services. As a matter of fact, the assistant to the German intelligence service, an ex-Nazi himself, was working for the Soviets since just after World War II. He had access to virtually every NATO document, and passed them all to the Soviet Union.

WALLACE: That person was Heinz Felfa (?), who worked for West German intelligence after World War II. Felfa and Kim Philby of British intelligence helped convince the Americans of the value of the former Nazis, a group the Soviets had heavily infiltrated. It was not till several years later that it was learned Kim Philby was really a mole working for the Russians.

LOFTUS: I read one top secret State Department report that said that there were 22 different intelligence agencies interrogating the emigres in the displaced persons camps, all competing with each other, all fighting over for the same Nazis.

REP. FRANK: And that was part of the problem. No, it wasn't just one group bringing in these Nazis. They engaged in a competition. So they began to spy on each other. We seem to have had more intelligence agencies than there were countries to spy on.

WALLACE: Not only were Nazis brought to the United States, but U.S. military intelligence also sent a number of them to South American countries, according to Loftus. And we have learned that at least one South American country told the United States it refused to take any more Nazis.

LOFTUS: And I would say that as a conservative estimate, there are more than 300 Byelorussian Nazis living in America today.

WALLACE: Still alive.

LOFTUS: Still alive.

WALLACE: Still operating. American citizens.

LOFTUS: That's correct. Some are still working for the government.

WALLACE: Some are working for quasi-governmental agencies, like Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty.

William Kratch is New York bureau chief and Gene Sosin (?) head of programming for Radio Liberty.

Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty was once funded by the CIA. Is that correct?

MAN: Yes.

WALLACE: How come?

MAN: It would have been embarrassing to admit that this was an official government function. It was the worst-kept secret, of course, of the cold war because the Soviets knew about it. But it was always possible to say on the diplomatic level, "This is a private organization."

WALLACE: Crusade for Freedom, publicly supported.

MAN: Precisely.

WALLACE: The Crusade for Freedom was the way most Americans learned about Radio Free Europe. Although money for it was solicited from the American people, Radio Free Europe was funded almost entirely by the CIA. Radio Free Europe broadcast the news to the Soviets and was also used to transmit secret messages behind the Iron Curtain.

It would seem that the people who worked for Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty should be people, if you will, beyond reproach. Am I wrong?

MAN: Like Caesar's wife. Right.

WALLACE: Did you have a man named Stanislas Stankevich (?) who worked here?

MAN: Yes. He was a free-lancer for a number of years with our Byelorussian service.

WALLACE: Who was Stanislas Stankevich? He was a Byelorussian who received secret orders from the German SS to kill every Jew in his county.

LOFTUS: In order to save ammunition, they had the Jews lie on top of each other in two rows, and they shot through the bodies. The blood seeped up through the sand at the end of the day and the ground was still quivering. So they had to post guards on top of the graves until everyone had suffocated.

The worst part wasn't found out until after the war, when Soviet doctors conducted autopsies. They could find no bullet wounds on any of the infants. Apparently, the Byelorussian police decided that the babies were too small to climb out of the grave, and so they wouldn't waste a bullet on them. They were buried alive.

WALLACE: And this was done under the command of Stanislas Stankevich.

LOFTUS: That's correct.

WALLACE: Now, we've heard tales, God help us, like this before. Question: What happened to Stanislas Stankevich?

LOFTUS: He was recruited by American intelligence, given a good job with Radio Liberty, and became a citizen of the United States.

WALLACE: In 1948, in a displaced persons camp in Germany, Stankevich was apprehended by U.S. Army counterintelligence. After investigating his background, the U.S. Army concluded:

LOFTUS: That Stankevich was a security risk to the United States because he worked first for the Soviets, then for the Nazis, and then the Soviets again, and he will work for anyone who pays him.

WALLACE: But rather than prosecute him, U.S. military intelligence recruited Stankevich as an informant and as a propagandist in America's cold war effort against the Soviets. Stankevich was smuggled into America and he moved into this quiet Queens, New York neighborhood, where he lived in relative obscurity for over 20 years, until John Loftus began his investigation.

LOFTUS: We had prepared a case against Stankevich containing his confessions, his admissions of Nazi background, and were ready to prosecute.

WALLACE: As a last step, the Justice Department asked their Soviet counterparts to provide some eyewitnesses for the case.

LOFTUS: We received a cable from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Soviet Union that said Stanislas Stankevich had just died.

WALLACE: Well, he died in the United States?

LOFTUS: And the Soviet government knew about it almost immediately.



WALLACE: This is a man brought into the United States to work for Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty.

MAN: The security clearance would have been done by the agency in those days. So...

WALLACE: By CIA.

MAN: By CIA.

WALLACE: You had another man who worked here, Villis Hazners (?)?

MAN: Yes.

WALLACE: The Immigration and Naturalization Service tried to deport Mr. Hazners, correct?

MAN: That's correct.

WALLACE: Failed. Correct?

MAN: Yes.

WALLACE: Did you read the record against Hazners, the witnesses who testified?

MAN: Yes. Yes, we did.

WALLACE: And you know that, among other things, here is one thing said about Hazners: "One of the witnesses testified that on another occasion, in July of 1941, he saw the respondent," Hazners, "and other Latvians force a number of Jews into a synagogue, which they then set on fire."

Does he still work for Radio Liberty or Radio Free Europe?

MAN: I believe he still contributes, or he now again contributes free-lance programs. Yes.

WALLACE: The Justice Department told us they had botched the case against Hazners. Mr. Hazners would not talk to us, on or off camera. But Anton Adamovich (?), currently a staff writer for Radio Liberty, agreed to. We read Mr. Adamaovich some of the information the Justice Department had gathered on him.

You were a propagandist for the Nazis. Then you became an informer for the U.S. Army...

ANTON ADAMOVICH: Yes.

WALLACE: ...intelligence.

ADAMOVICH: yes.

WALLACE: And then, it was as a result of that that you were brought into the United States.

ADAMOVICH: Yes. That's -- generally, that's right. Yes. In general.

WALLACE: And you know that both President Roosevelt and President Truman said that Nazi collaborators...

ADAMOVICH: Yes, I knew.

WALLACE: ...were not supposed to come into the United States.

ADAMOVICH: I knew. I knew.

WALLACE: So that you knew that you came into the United States illegally.

ADAMOVICH: Yes. Yes. No, no, no. I came legally, and I told everything about my background when I was admitted to U.S.A.

WALLACE: To the FBI.

ADAMOVICH: Of course.

WALLACE: And the FBI said?

ADAMOVICH: The FBI said, "All right. He knew this."

WALLACE: "We knew you were a Nazi collaborator. We knew that you helped Army intelligence. We'll reward you, in spite of the fact that you were a Nazi collaborator."

ADAMOVICH: Yeah, yeah. That's right. That's right. He had no choice. [Unintelligible] collaborates with Soviet, the Bolsheviks, which we hate. Seven years I was persecuted by Bolsheviks.

WALLACE: Right.

ADAMOVICH: Yes. [Unintelligible]

WALLACE: Dr. Vito Tumasch (?), who lives in this house in the Bronx, also made that choice, and had his past history kept secret by U.S. intelligence services. Tumasch was for three months the Nazi-appointed Mayor of Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia, during World War II.

On several occasions, we tried to talk with Dr. Tumasch about his reported role in recruiting the local police force, which massacred 45,000 persons. But he refused to appear on camera.

You let us into your home, and then you say you are unwilling to talk about these allegations.

DR. VITO TUMASCH: I'm sorry. I do not talk. I cannot talk.

WALLACE: Off-camera, he admitted he was indeed the Nazi Mayor of Minsk, but he denied having anything to do with the extermination of Jews.

By the late 1970s, with stories continuing to surface about Nazi war criminals in the United States, a House congressional committee chaired by then-Congressman Joshua Eilberg requested files on 111 alleged Nazi war criminals living in America. Among those on the list were two Byelorussians, Franz Kushal (?) and Emmanuel Jasiuk (?).

REP. FRANK: In 1978 Congress specifically asked the General Accounting Office to get information on these two people. The General Accounting Office asked the Army about it, and they were lied to. The Army simply lied to the General Accounting Office in 1978 and said, "We don't have files on these people." They had the files.

LOFTUS: The Army sent a letter, through channels, to Congressman Eilberg stating that they had searched certain very specific vaults for all files pertaining to Kushal and had found no others. That information was a lie. I went down to the identical vaults and retrieved the Army intelligence files for Kushal one year later, after Eilberg had been told that no such files existed.

WALLACE: What would be the motive of the Army to lie?

LOFTUS: If Congress had been given either the Kushal or the Josiuk dossiers, it would have inevitably unraveled the entire smuggling operation. The information had to be suppressed at all costs.

WALLACE: In 1978 the Congress was finally trying to get to the bottom of the Nazi connection. On behalf of Congress, John Tipton, a GAO investigator, requested all intelligence files on alleged Nazis living in America. After a careful review, he wrote this report for the GAO entitled "Widespread Conspiracy to Obstruct Probes of Alleged Nazi War Criminals Not Supported by Available Evidence." But now Tipton says that apparently he didn't get all the available evidence.

We then showed Mr. Tipton a note that had been inserted into the file he'd requested: "Defense material not cleared for review by GAO. Do not disclose to GAO until notified to do so."

So the Department of Defense was covering up material that the Congress asked for concerning Nazi war criminals and their admission into the United States.

JOHN TIPTON: Unless there's another reason for it.

WALLACE: We then read to Mr. Tipton from the FBI file on Emmanuel Josiuk, another file he had been told did not exist.

WALLACE: Subject, name of the man that we're talking about, who was allegedly a war criminal and caused deaths of people in Poland. Now resides -- gives his address -- Passaic, New Jersey.

Were you informed about all that when you asked about that in 1978?

TIPTON: I was not aware of that aspect of it.

WALLACE: That information was in the hands not just of the Defense Department, but of the FBI at the time you asked for it.

TIPTON: It appeared to be that way. That, I think, is the first time I've seen that document.

WALLACE: And there can be little doubt from this document and from Defense Department documents that they lied to you and said they had nothing on this individual.

TIPTON: That seems to be the case.

WALLACE: So the Congress was misled back in 1978.

TIPTON: That's correct. From the information that John Loftus has showed to me and that you've showed me here today, I'd have to say that appears so.

WALLACE: Here in the top secret vaults in Maryland, John Loftus discovered how the Army had been able to keep the Nazi smuggling operation secret for so long a time.

LOFTUS: They routinely were deleting all documents showing that the government had assisted their entry. And I caught them at it. We went down, we confronted the Army officials, and they said that they thought that we knew all about the sanitizing program. Apparently, it's a routine procedure with them. And the procedure was established many years ago, and they were just following routine orders. And for one day, I was

allowed to look through the dossiers with no deletions. And of the ten dossiers I looked at, three had letters evidencing government assistance in entering the United States.

WALLACE: And these three were Byelorussian war criminals.

LOFTUS: Two were Byelorussian and the third was Hans Felfa, the Soviet spy working in the German intelligence service. He had been assisted in coming to the United States.

REP. FRANK: These people had a mission, which was to defeat the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, a very admirable mission, one that was clearly in our national interest. The trouble was that they went out and did it on their own with no weighing of consequences, with no sense of what harm they might be doing to other interests, to our moral fiber.

I don't impugn Wisner's motives, but his operation, almost from start to finish, as documented here, was a disaster for the United States.

WALLACE: But it is a disaster that might still be continuing. Loftus had yet another example of a mass murderer coming to the United States. Because the information is still classified, he cannot reveal the subject's name.

Are criminals, are undesirables, in the context in which we're speaking, still being brought in today?

LOFTUS: The person whose file I read, there was substantial evidence that he had persecuted hundreds of thousands of civilians.

WALLACE: And he was brought in how recently?

LOFTUS: Recently.

WALLACE: And he was brought in because?

LOFTUS: He had been working for OPC.

WALLACE: Way back then?

LOFTUS: That's correct.

WALLACE: Some place along the line, I get the feeling that you got rather frustrated by your experience in Washington at the Office of Special Investigations and inside the Department of Justice.

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LOFTUS: Very much so. Federal judges are extremely reluctant to strip someone of his citizenship unless there's an actual proof of murder, of blood on their hands. Did you ever try and prove a murder trial 30 year after the fact, with all the witnesses behind the Iron Curtain and none of that evidence available to you?

The most infuriating part was that these people had confessed over and over again to the intelligence agencies. We had all the information on their war crimes and their atrocities, and we couldn't use one piece of that material in court. It didn't comply with the rules of evidence.

WALLACE: Was there the desire to do the job? I mean the fact of the matter is that this has gone on for 35 years, and nobody, until this moment, has had the desire to tell the story.

LOFTUS: The Office of Special Investigations bent over backwards to spare as much staff and money and resources as they could.

WALLACE: I get the impression that nobody really wants to handle this.

Why have you gone public?

LOFTUS: Wouldn't you?

We have to let it be known that we will never allow people who kill babies to go free. No matter how long it takes us or how well they hide, no matter how well-connected they are, someday the truth is going to come out. There is no statute of limitations for mass murder. And sooner or later, someone like me or someone else will come along and find out the truth.

WALLACE: A couple of footnotes. Richard Nixon's office said that he would have no comment on his knowledge of what we have reported. And the FBI told us that due to the classified nature of the information we've detailed, they too would not comment.